

**U.S. COAST GUARD**  
**ALTERNATE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM (ACP)**  
***Supplement Review and Revision***

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Rev. 16 SEP 2002

**INTRODUCTION**

The Alternate Compliance Program (ACP) relies on a regulatory framework that equates the United States' Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) to a recognized classification society's rules plus applicable international standards (such as SOLAS or MARPOL) plus a Supplement (CFR = CLASS RULES + INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS + SUPPLEMENT). The Supplement captures the difference that exists between class rules and international standards and the CFR—it is specific to each recognized class society because it is predicated upon a given class society's rules. Due to streamlining of the approval process and the application of a "general equivalency approach," the Supplement will require revision over the course of its application.

**GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

1. All Classification Society Supplements will be reviewed annually.
2. A holding file will be established to house changes that occur in the interim.
3. It will be essential to capture previous versions of the Supplement and assign a date and edition number—a given edition will exist as the standard that a particular vessel was built to or presently adheres to (i.e. a vessel built to 2000 Class Rules and the 1999 Supplement).
4. Additions to the Supplement are to be minimized. Our intended goal is to reduce Supplement items by recognition of the incorporation of U.S. interpretations of international regulations and particular U.S. regulations into classification society rules and/or improvement to international standards. However, clarifications and additions that are vital to the interests of safety and security are precisely the items that *must* be incorporated into the Supplement through a revision process.

**EXECUTION**

1. Supplements are to be reviewed annually. This review will occur on two fronts, but will be conducted in a collaborative manner: (1) an internal review by the recognized classification society and (2) by the Coast Guard (primarily based upon field-level, OCMi input). The intent is to capture edits that need to be made to each Supplement and apply such amendments once a year. The Coast Guard, specifically the Office of Design and Engineering Standards (MSE), retains final approval authority on the Supplement, as it is a regulatory document as stated within 46 CFR §8.430.
2. Interim changes, amendments, additions, and subtractions from each Supplement will be placed in an "active" holding file on the ACP website and in hard copy at Coast Guard Headquarters (MSE). A holding file will exist for each Supplement. However, the pending changes to the Supplement will not immediately apply—the purpose of the holding file is to disseminate impending changes. Unless a significant, vital safety concern manifests itself through a problem with the Supplement, interim issues will be incorporated into the Supplement on the annual cycle (the specific revision period is to be determined). The Coast Guard reserves the rights to immediately apply and/or amend a standard within the Supplement to meet significant, vital safety concerns.

3. Origination of a Supplement question, discrepancy, or need for clarification can occur at any level (field unit, District, Marine Safety Center, or Headquarters) and can be brought forward by either the classification society or the Coast Guard. Typically, this is something not adequately addressed in the Supplement or is an issue of significant difference between the “general equivalency” of the ACP Regulatory Model and the CFR. If the issue arises at a field unit, it is preferred to be addressed at the most direct level possible. Often, through the course of the local OCMI’s project-specific oversight plan, the classification society and the Coast Guard will resolve conflicts that lie on the “fringes” of the ACP Regulatory Model. If a Supplement alteration or clarification, however slight or minor, is needed, it must be brought to the attention of the Office of Design and Engineering Standards (MSE).
4. If no amendments are necessary, the most current version of the Supplement continues to apply. Through the annual cycle, the Coast Guard will review proposed changes from the class society and the class society will carry out the approved and directed amendments. It is important to note that while the Supplement is specific to each recognized class society, the authority to approve amendments to the document rests with the Coast Guard. Thus, there exists a dual responsibility with regard to the Supplement. It is “owned” by both the recognized class society and the Coast Guard, but amendments to the document must be collaboratively implemented.
5. The appellate authority is the Coast Guard’s Office of Design and Engineering Standards (MSE). The flow of revision issues should include the local OCMI (as applicable), the cognizant District Marine Safety Office (as applicable), the Marine Safety Center (through the Office of the Technical Advisor), and, ultimately, the Office of Design and Engineering Standards (specifically, G-MSE-2).